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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to reinterpret the idea of art in daily living in a postmodern stance to keep pace with changes in Korean society. It briefly describes the sociopolitical context for art education in Korea in the 1990s and the internationalization movement. The paper presents a conceptual analysis of art in daily living and explores its application to Korean education. As Korean art education was largely based on the Japanese model, the paper then examines the Japanese adaptation of Western ideas from the United States. (Contains 15 references.) (BT)

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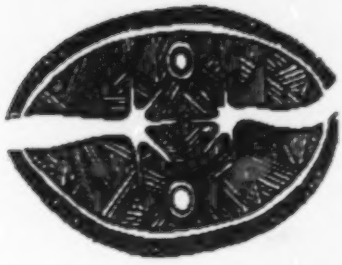

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"Art in Daily Living: Its Relevance to Internationalization Education in Korea"

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"Art in Daily Living": Its Relevance to Internationalization Education in Korea

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I. Introduction

A curriculum mirrors a sociopolitical condition (Hamblen, 1986). Each society develops an educational system based on the values, ideas, and beliefs it wishes to perpetuate at any one time (Efland, 1990). In this manner, pedagogic systems reflect the cultural values of a given society. Thus curriculum change, or development, is always closely related to the continual sociocultural transformations of a culture of nation, and its political and economic interests. Given that education in general is a form of cultural transmission (Apple, 1979), the art education profession is also influenced by processes of political, religious, and particularly, cultural change.

The sociopolitical context for art education in Korea in the 1990s is that it is a homogeneous society which is culturally diverse. In accordance with the country's rapid economic growth, in the modern period Korea's cultural values have become more and more pluralistic. The open-market policy of the Korean Government in the 1990s plays a key role in this process. In the 1990s, 'internationalization' has become one of the most significant political issues, not just in the economic and social agenda in Korea, but in education as well. In Korean society in general, there is a current awareness of the challenge presented by simultaneous moves at the national level towards a more global or international cultural pluralism and ethnocentrism. The proposal of "internationalization education" by the Committee for Developing Internationalism (the Special Advisory Institute of the Korean President), can be understood in the larger context that education as a cultural transmission in a given society as Apple proposed. The central aim of internationalization by the Committee for Developing Internationalism was defined as that of conserving and developing Korean national culture, while at the same time learning to understand cultures of other peoples (Chosun Daily Newspaper, 1995).

It appears to be the case that the internationalization movement in Korea has been influenced by the ideology of cultural pluralism that is pervasive in the West which is characteristically described as "postmodern", whereby the ideas of both the global village and regionalism are promoted simultaneously (Collins, 1989; Jencks, 1989). In this sense, cultural pluralism is understood to mean cultural coexistence and as promoting both the maintenance of a unique national/cultural identity and openness to their cultures. Employing the hypothesis that a curriculum mirrors a sociopolitical condition in a given society, a problem is found in the Korean National Art Curriculum. Despite the recent Korean Government policy on internationalization and the fact that the Korean National Curriculum has been reformed seven times in the last fifty years, its theoretical framework is based almost exclusively on Western art education theories of the 1920s and the 1950s. It is largely based on Japanese interpretations of three Western aesthetic theories: art as expression which was dominant in Western European art education from the 1920s to 1950s; pragmatic theory, which emphasized art in daily living in the 1930s in America, and a Bauhaus formalistic aesthetic which came into being in Germany in the 1920s.

The purpose of this paper is to reinterpret the idea of art in daily living in a postmodern stance to keep pace with changes in Korean society. In this writing, a conceptual analysis of art in daily living will be first made, in order to reinterpret it in a postmodern way. Following this, its application to Korean education will be briefly explored. As Korean art education was largely based on Japanese model, in this section the Japanese adaptation of Western ideas from the USA will be simultaneously examined.

II. õArt in daily livingõ in the USA

The concept of 'art in daily living' in America was "reconstructionist" (Efland, 1990) or "social adaptationist" (Eisner, 1985) in the sense that art is viewed instrumentally. It was to apply to practical life in order to transform or enhance the aesthetic quality of the American people's individual life in the 1930s in the USA when the nation was in the Great Depression. What can be inferred from this is that the idea of a reconstructionism drew upon Deweyan philosophy in the 1930s (Efland, 1990). Dewey (1966) defined knowledge as a perception which can connect an object in order to determine its applicability in a given situation. Thus, for Dewey, knowledge is useful when it is adapted to the environment according to an individual's needs and applied to one's aims and desires in a given situation. Thus, in Deweyan concept, the function of knowledge is to make an experience available to be utilized in a given situation. Hence, new experiences are conceived as a result of the reconstruction of social reality and society exists through a process of transmission (Dewey, 1966). In this context, education is a "process of accommodating the future to the past, or using the past as a resource in developing the future" (p. 79). In this way, new experiences are a result of the reconstruction of social reality. Knowledge is the act of bringing to consciousness, an understanding of ourselves and the world in which we live. Thus, in Deweyan philosophy, the ideology of social reconstruction means a process which would accommodate to change (Efland, 1990).

Relying upon this Dewey's idea, art is useful when it is applied to practical life. In this context, Melvin Haggerty and Ziegfeld in the 1930s in the USA considered art as a resource with which to solve problems of daily living in the home, school, or community. Consequently, in this approach, educational content of art in daily living was focused on its practical application to daily life. Haggerty (1935) proposed that the objectives of art education should be: improvement of the standards of taste in a community through an educational program; development of children's sensitiveness to good design, which can make ordinary homes habitations. So in pragmatic aesthetic, art is defined as one inherent in the surroundings in which human lives and cannot separated from the ordinary life. What Haggerty identified as aesthetic quality in terms of art's relation to life includes: advertising; display of goods for sale; the dressing of store windows; the display of dresses and suits; the design of packages and wrappings; illustrations in magazines.

The one concrete example of the practice of these objectives is found in Courses Study in the secondary schools in the USA. Leon Winslow (1939), who was one proponent of art in daily living movement in the 1930s in the USA, along with Haggerty and Ziegfeld, explained that it was for the students who had specific abilities or talent in art and who would discontinue their study of art once obtaining a job after graduating from school or who would pursue a liberal arts curriculum in college. The courses were continued for two years. According to Winslow, its purposes were: (i) to explore the possibilities of art as a means of earning a livelihood, (ii) to pursue an additional cultural subject in schools; (iii) to improve everyday living standards through learning about how art contributes to daily living in the home and the community. The courses included "Art of the Ages", "Costume Design and Illustration", "Industrial Design", "Freehand Drawing", "American Art", "Stagecraft", "Interior Design", and "Modeling and Carving" (quoted from Winslow, 1939, p. 26). The teaching of them were emphasized the integration of subject matter with other subjects to create more effective knowledge. Teachers in the secondary school level were expected to relate the instruction that they offered to other subjects (e.g. history, geography, science, mathematics, language, home economics and industrial arts), transcending the traditional discipline boundaries (Winslow, 1939).

III. Art in daily living in Korean art curriculum

In the First Curriculum (1955-62) regulated by the Korean Ministry of Education shortly after the end of Korean War in 1953, educational aims for art were focused on their practical application to daily life, along with art education theory and practice espoused by Lowenfeld in the 1950s in the USA. During this period, the American Peabody Educational Mission was influencing Korean educational policy. This mission aided the Korean Ministry of Education through financial support and human resources, with a view to contributing to the improvement of Korean education methods. With the introduction of the idea of art as a practical subject applied to daily life, educational content was selected from daily life, incorporating theories of Lowenfeld's expressive art education. The aims of art education in the national curriculum for primary and secondary schools were derived from expressive theories; while the content drew both on the concept of art as daily life and expressionist theories. Consequently, both in Japanese curriculum and in Korea's First Curriculum, "reconstructionism", an educational philosophy which had been developed in the

USA in the 1930s (Efland, 1990), was espoused simultaneously with the "expressionism" of Lowenfeld from the 1950s in the USA (Efland, 1990), although they arose in different social contexts.

The coexistence of these two conflicting education emphases on self-expression and art in daily life is the result of Japanese curriculum made in 1947; as art education in Korea in its inception was influenced by the Japanese model. According to Arai (1948), in the earlier part of the American occupation after the Pacific War (1941-5), American curriculum texts, such as Winslow's *Art in Secondary Education* (1941) and Ziegfeld and Faulkner's *Art Today* were increasingly influential on the Japanese art making. This idea was reflected in the first exemplary model of "the Course of Study" in which the stated aim of arts and handicrafts was "to encourage children to contribute to the improvement of their lifestyle" (Okazaki, 1984, p. 89). The statement, "an activity to find the beauty in the environment in relation to beauty in nature and in works of art" in Japanese curriculum in 1947 was an adaptation of Ruskin's idea to the reconstructionist concept.

"Art and daily life" in the Korean curriculum appeared from the Sixth curriculum made in 1992 as curriculum content domain is another application of this reconstructionist view of art in the 1930s in the USA. Analysis of the authorized textbook (A, B, C, D, E) for art education in school, published in 1994 and 1995 shows that they interpret art and daily life as meaning a discovery of the diverse characteristics of artistic form in everyday life. In every authorized textbook, the idea of art in daily life is interpreted as the 'appreciation' of art in practical affairs (e.g. dress, exterior and interior design for buildings, craft etc.) In the Korean curriculum, poster-making, environmental design and decoration, which includes interior design, is a typical example of this linking of art with daily life.

IV. Reinterpretation of ôart in daily livingö in a postmodern idea

The concept of æart in daily livingÆ was drawn upon the modernist formal and expressive frame when it emphasized self-expression and applied the principles of design to all of art's domains. As a formalist stance it promotes ideas about the possibility of universal access to any kind of art at any time or place by people through analysis of its formal elements regardless of cultural or historical context. Winslow (1939) proposed that design principles should be applied to every day problems including: "problems of selection, of arrangement, of maintenance, of understanding and of appreciation, of expression and of creation" (p. 5). However, Winslow's idea of art is a rather confused one when he explained as follows: "the approach to art should be from the standpoint of the individual, as well as from that of the social group" (p. 4).

The idea of art in everyday life for understanding the cultural world parallels the aim of postmodern art education. Similarly, the inherent idea of art in daily living can be largely interpreted in a postmodern stance for the following reasons. Firstly, as Deweyan philosophy can be interpreted as postmodern in that Dewey understood the phenomenon of experience as being in actuality an active, social process. This coincides with the postmodernist's definition of humans as social beings, in contrast to the modernist's humanistic view. From this perspective, for Haggerty (1935), art's problems are characterized as 'never completely solved' as life itself is changing forever. Secondly, the concept of art in daily living is more postmodern when it rejects the modernist art for the few elite. Haggerty said:

> Art as the province of a sophisticated few lies outside the pattern of our thinking here. Art as a cult may be a hindrance rather than an aid to art as a way of life, and it clearly seems to be so in may cases. The teacher's art must be that of the broad and crowded avenues of life, the home, the factory, and the market place. It is this conception that must be clarified and dramatized in concrete ways, if art is to take its place in the schools as a major and vital instrument of cultural education. (p. 5)

Thus, applying art to practical daily life, embraces the idea which is in the same vein with the postmodernist's "everyday aesthetics" (Duncum, 1999) which considers it to be more important than high art in understanding cultural life. Duncum explained this postmodern concern for everyday aesthetics. According to him, "the flow of signs and images which saturate the fabric of everyday life is now such that sociologists refer to the societal turn towards the cultural, which is simultaneously a turn towards the visual" (p. 295). Duncum identified aesthetic objects as those found in everyday life which is the case in art in

daily living. It includes: "shopping malls, theme parks, advertising in all its forms, tourism, the internet and television" (p. 295).

V. Adaptation of art in daily living to internationalization education in Korea

Given that the curriculum called "art in daily life" in Korea was underpinned in America by social reconstructionist educational ideas, it could perhaps be reinterpreted as a way of responding to one strand of internationalist education policy in Korea. The implication here is that this theoretical stance can be reconsidered in the light of postmodern developments. It reveals the changing aim of art education. The aim of art education is directed toward the understanding of the world through everyday visual images in our environments which is increasingly diverse and multicultural identified as teaching content in art in daily living. It includes new technologies, economic needs and major social developments through which the concept of cultural continuity and cultural change is revealed. The understanding of cultural continuity and change which can be effective means in valuing cultural identities and differences, are the very concerns of internationalization education in Korea. In perceiving how the understanding of such differences can be achieved, semiotics has been identified as the most effective method in which signs and symbols which play in the unit of 'a society'. It deals with its uses, and application and transformation. Semiotics is also very practical because its inferences are the ones in 'our environment' per se (Sturrock, 1993). Thus it can lead a student to be a meaning maker (Addison, 1999). In 'art in daily living', art was integrated into other subject areas to solve practical problems in real life. Likewise, the semiotic approach to the subject of art uses all types of visual imagery from fine art, advertising, propaganda and images from popular culture to expand its discipline boundary to understand the complexities of imagery, challenging pre-formed values and beliefs.

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